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UNCLAS CHIANG MAI 000019

SIPDIS

FOR ECA/PE/V/M (AMOYLAN AND SROBINSON), INFO ECA/PE/V/R/F (JVANDERWOUDE AND EAP/PD (VSIDABRAS AND JDAVIES)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [OEXC](#) [KPAO](#) [TH](#) [KE](#)

SUBJECT: NIGHT SAFARI QUESTIONS TRAIL THAKSIN

REF: A) BANGKOK 7768 (05) B) BANGKOK 7581 (05) C) CHIANG MAI 233 (05)

1. In the midst of continuing controversy here over the centrally conceived Chiang Mai Night Safari and the proposed "Chiang Mai World" development, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra also faced media

2. Chiang Mai-born Thaksin has made it clear he supports big development projects in his home province despite vocal protests by environmental and cultural protection groups over the not-yet-opened Night "Chiang Mai World" (ref c). The Prime Minister is adding fuel to this fire by scheduling a "mobile cabinet meeting" at the Night Safari February 6.

3. On hearing that Thaksin would be negotiating to import Kenyan wildlife (ref b) for the Night Safari while on an official trip to Africa in

4. With the Night Safari and related tourism development in Chiang Mai continuing to draw opposition for a lack of transparency, importation to work on the subject. In coordination with the Environmental Reporters Club she plans to produce a book about "Chiang Mai World", which encompasses the Night Safari, an elephant park, the Rajapreuk Hort

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